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Racking Up The Energy Savings

Bridgewater College Eyes Efficiency

Posted: February 10, 2012

By EMILY SHARRER

BRIDGEWATER — Like any good detective, Scott Clark, an energy engineer with architecture and engineering firm EYP, has a keen eye for minute details.

Entering McKinney Center for Science and Mathematics at Bridgewater College on Thursday, Clark turned to a group of students and administrators and began analyzing the building as thoroughly as a crime scene.

The cracks under the doors, the thermostats, the lighting all can have a significant effect on the college's carbon footprint and energy efficiency, he says.

"Even though it's a really small gap, it's still a gap that's going to be sucking energy [out of the building]," said Clark, referring to the spaces in the exterior doors barely noticeable to the untrained eye.

"I would say energy detective is a good way to describe [my job]," Clark said with a grin. "It's kind of energy 'Law and Order.' The first part is gathering the facts, the second half is putting [the] prosecution together [saying], 'Here's what we've found, here's what we suggest.'"

Clark and Glen DeWillie, project executive and senior associate at the Washington, D.C.-based firm, visited Bridgewater College Thursday for the third time since the college's ongoing comprehensive energy audit began in October.



Glen DeWillie (second from left), project executive with Washington, D.C.-based firm EYP, tours the center with Teshome Molalenge (left), executive director of facilities at BC, Clark (second from right), and BC junior Tyler Goss, a member of the student Environmental Task Force and New Community Project. (Photos by Michael Reilly / DN-R)



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The \$225,000 audit is being paid for in part by a \$150,000 grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. The fund is putting money toward similar audits at colleges across the nation.

EYP's \$75,000 bid was the lowest of three submitted to complete the 18-month project. The remaining \$150,000 will pay for meters to track energy use and their installation in some college buildings.

The purpose of the audit is to create a comprehensive report on energy use and then put conservation initiatives in place and educate students.

"We want to be role models for the community," said Teshome Molalenge, executive director of facilities and auxiliary enterprises at Bridgewater College. "It prepares us and I think the [energy] savings can go to other projects on campus."

What's It Like So Far?

EYP already has reviewed the 935,000 square feet of building space on the BC campus.

Molalenge said 80 percent of those buildings are at least 50 years old and several are more than a century old. Thirteen buildings — a quarter of those on campus — account for 65 percent of the college's energy use.

Last year, the school spent just less than \$1 million on water, natural gas and electricity.

The comprehensive report will outline possible conservation measures, such as swapping out light bulbs, putting motion sensors on lights or initiating student-marketing campaigns.

"As you start to implement one, you immediately start gathering savings," he said.

Additionally, EYP will recommend installation of meters to collect information about energy use, even at specific times of day. Once projects are put in place, the meters will help track their effectiveness and could lead to other cost- and energy-saving projects.

A list of all suggestions, costs, the amount the energy-saving measures will take to begin saving the college money and buildings best suited for energy meters will be presented to the college at the end of March, DeWillie said.

Contact Emily Sharrer at 574-6286 or esharrer@dnronline.com

Scott Clark, energy engineer with architecture and engineering firm EYP, points out lighting and energy features at Bridgewater College's McKinney Center for Science and Mathematics during a tour Wednesday.



"We want to be role models for the community," said Teshome Molalenge, executive director of facilities and auxiliary enterprises, on having an energy audit at Bridgewater College.

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